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**U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD PROGRAM TO
COMBAT THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO SEXUALLY EXPLOIT CHILDREN**

*Four Indictments Announced, Including Prosecution for
Possession of Hundreds of Thousands of Pictures and Movie Files*

Baltimore, Maryland - At a press conference today, federal and state authorities announced the implementation of Project Safe Childhood in Maryland, a unified and comprehensive strategy to combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children through the internet. The U.S. Attorney's Office also announced that federal charges have been filed in four new child pornography cases.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein said, "Parents who let their children use the internet without supervision might just as well drop them off alone on the most dangerous street in the world. There are monsters on the internet, and they are ready to pounce the moment your child logs on. As we work with our partners to prosecute child abusers, we will focus on our goals of deterring future abuse and alerting parents about the dangers their children face on the internet."

Internet solicitation and exploitation of children is a growing problem nationwide. Interactive websites allow potential predators to communicate with children in their own homes. Many young internet users report having publicized their e-mail addresses, and many children receive unwanted sexual solicitations. Most teenagers admit that they do not want their parents to know about conduct that they engage in on-line, including corresponding with strangers, and some even send digital photographs of themselves to strangers. These conditions make it possible for sexual predators to exploit the innocence and trust of young victims in their own homes.

Project Safe Childhood has five essential components: partnerships, law enforcement coordination, training, public awareness and accountability. The success of this strategy depends on a team effort among our local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, and on the awareness, dedication and determination of concerned citizens, community activists, parents, educators and civic organizations.

Project Safe Childhood is a program developed by the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland to join forces with federal, state and local law enforcement, and with private

and non-profit entities dedicated to protecting children against sexual abuse. It includes State's Attorneys' Offices, the Maryland State Police, sheriffs' offices and police departments, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Postal Inspection Service, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security, the United States Secret Service, Defense Criminal Investigative Service and the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division. The success of the program will depend on continued cooperation and coordination among this team of local, state, and federal agencies, as well as the investment of community, faith-based, public and private child-protection entities, and the deployment of the most effective prosecutorial tools available.

The program is based on a nationwide model developed by the U.S. Department of Justice under the leadership of Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. www.projectsafefchildhood.gov

Indictments Returned, Including Charge that One of the Defendants Possessed Thousands of Depictions of Bestiality, Incest, Bondage and Sadistic Treatment Involving Minors

A federal grand jury in Baltimore returned four separate indictments on October 26, 2006, charging four defendants with receipt and/or possession of materials depicting minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct. One defendant was also charged with sexual exploitation of a minor to produce child pornography.

A two-count indictment unsealed today charges James Leonard Watson, age 43, of Pasadena, Maryland with receipt and possession of child pornography. The indictment alleges that Watson received hundreds of depictions of minors engaging in sexually explicit conduct in April 2005. By June 2005, Watson allegedly possessed hundreds of thousands of pictures and movie files stored on 17 computers and external hard drives depicting child pornography, including thousands of child victims identified from previous investigations, as well as depictions of bestiality, incest, bondage and sadistic treatment involving minors.

A four-count indictment charges Steven Douglass Buckley, age 36, of Cordova, Maryland with sexual exploitation of a minor to produce child pornography; attempted receipt of child pornography by soliciting an undercover FBI agent to transmit child pornography materials; and possession of 16 still images and nine movie files of child pornography, including images produced in Germany. The indictment alleges that between May 2002 and July 2003, Buckley induced a girl less than 12 years old to engage in sexually explicit conduct to produce nude, sexually explicit photographs.

A one-count indictment unsealed today charges Robert Bower Reeves, age 43, of Forest Hill, Maryland with possession of over 100 still images of child pornography, including at least 10 images depicting known child victims identified from prior investigations and produced in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Finally, a one-count indictment charges David Barry Mentzer, age 51, of Joppa, Maryland with possession of 33 still images of child pornography, including images of a child victim identified

in a prior investigation and produced in Russia.

All of the defendants face a maximum sentence of up to 20 years in prison for possession of child pornography and some face a mandatory minimum of 10 years on those charges. Buckley also faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years and a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison for sexual exploitation of a minor and a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years and a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for attempted receipt of child pornography. Watson also faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years and a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison for receipt of child pornography.

An indictment is not a finding of guilt. An individual charged by indictment is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at some later criminal proceedings.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the agencies mentioned above, and the Harford County Child Protective Services, for their outstanding and cooperative work on child pornography investigations. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Tamera Fine and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Fortune, who are prosecuting the four cases announced today.
